

Washington State Patrol Media Release

Chief John R. Batiste



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WSP Trooper and Two Citizens Recognized For their Life Saving Action

Chief John R. Batiste recognized the heroic efforts of Trooper Bill Ashcraft and two Gig Harbor residents, Mr. Stewart Klabenesh and Mr. Brad Bayliffe for preventing an individual from committing suicide by jumping off the Tacoma Narrows Bridge.

On October 13, 2005, Trooper Ashcraft was on duty when he observed a pedestrian on the bridge who was dazed, exhibiting unusual behavior, and holding onto the railing with both hands. The pedestrian agreed to Ashcraft's offer for a ride off the bridge after informing the trooper he was afraid of the bridge height. While patting the pedestrian down for weapons the pedestrian attempted to jump from the bridge.

At great personal danger Ashcraft grabbed onto the pedestrian and pulled him off the railing to the sidewalk where a struggle ensued. Ashcraft was unable to secure both arms of the pedestrian to handcuff him and in the process pulled a hamstring muscle.

Fortunately Stewart Klabenesh and Brad Bayliffe witnessed Ashcraft struggling with the pedestrian and stopped to render assistance in gaining control of the individual, placing themselves in a dangerous situation in order to help the trooper.

Ashcraft received a Bureau Commendation. Klabenesh and Bayliffe received WSP Appreciation Certificates and Chiefs Coins for their heroic efforts.

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